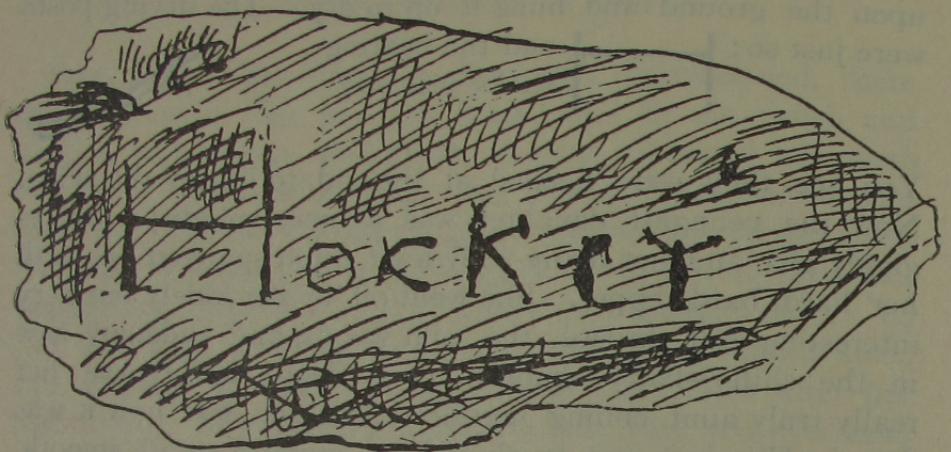


longer so) Juggins went away by her lonely but very interesting self into the wild, wet woods. And wishing to warn all higgly-giggly gamesome girls in future she scratched her story on a piece of stone, just like this:—



She scratched a high and 'mendous drying post, and the bulbous block, and two crooked, curvy beating sticks, and her really-truly aunt (whom they called Tabbi), you can tell her by her 'squisite coif, in one hand she held up a hard, hard slipper (and it *was* hard, b.-b.), and in the other a stick pointing to the bulbous block. And she drew herself (who was called Juggins), both kneeling and asking forgiveness and after it was over. Only she could not draw very well. And this was the first game of hockey.

## THE READING OF BIOGRAPHIES.

Once upon a time there lived a man who boldly said that Biography was his "favourite form of fiction." A solid writer has remarked that "History is the essence of innumerable biographies." Would it be logical to work out a syllogism thus, "Therefore history is a favourite form of fiction?" Most of us like to read the records of the lives of others; perhaps it flatters our vanity, for "lives of great men all remind us we can make our lives sublime," and many a life-weary Caponsacchi draws close the tattered gown of their own circumstances, and breathes "Thus would I fight, rule, save the world," before they awake to the "old solitary nothingness."

Perhaps one of the charms of reading an autobiography is the knowledge that our standard of truthfulness must certainly equal if not excel the author's, and that our own experiences might prove equally interesting if presented in the same guise!

There are two great schools of biography—patient research leading to the presentation of some very familiar historical personality in a new light, and thereby illuminating the darkness of some bygone age; and biography which is really only an expanded obituary notice, like Sydney Lee's recent "Life of Queen Victoria," or the long-expected but not yet arrived "Life of Gladstone," which John Morley has promised us.

The first school has two sub-divisions—one class aims at the discovery of the truth, the other to prove that the author's conception of the character is justified.

For example, Andrew Lang's "Mystery of Mary Stuart," though not avowedly biography, is an attempt to elucidate sundry very obscure passages in her life, and it leaves us with a totally different conception of her circumstances and her character than that to which tradition had accustomed us. Far from being the beloved and bewitching woman who had the world at her feet, poor Mary appears in the

light of a political dupe, whose attentions were rather embarrassing than otherwise. Not that Andrew Lang probably was in the least desirous to alter our ideas, or would even endorse this construction put upon them; he only gives the facts, and they speak for themselves, with rude and unvarnished plainness.

To the second sub-division belongs Froude's fascinating Life of Erasmus; but though when we have read it we feel we have made a new spiritual friend, yet one cannot repress an ungodly curiosity as to where Erasmus ends and Froude begins; and how free sundry very liberal translations may be.

But where biography is concerned with those dead within living memories, there are again classes into which they may be divided:—

1. "Official lives," written by relations and friends of the deceased.
2. "Popular lives," often written while the victim is yet living and rejoicing in newspaper cuttings and upholstery.
3. "Candid lives," which aim at "showing up" the real man or woman, generally in a very critical spirit.

The first great class must be read by all who would live in the lives of the past, and realize the solidarity of human nature throughout all ages. John Morley's "Cromwell," Carlyle's "Frederick the Great," Lord Roseberry's "Pitt," Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," are in their different ways all excellent and humanizing reading. No one who has not read "The Lives of the Popes" has any conception of what the History of the Church has really been, and no one can understand the times of Napoleon who has not read Scott's life of him. Not that it is literature, for it is very unworthy of its author's reputation, but it shows so admirably the spirit in which the world at large regarded him. Of course, such books as Boswell's "Life of Johnson," Scott's "Life of Napoleon," Southey's "Life of Nelson," and Plutarch's inimitable sidelights on the Ancients were all more or less topical when written, and therefore strictly speaking belong to the second class, but they have become classical and historical, and must be used by all who wish to see the trend of the ages in the measure of a man's life-time. But

those of us who regard the library lists with a cursory eye might as well include some of this form of fiction in their list, as well as such gems as "The Murderer's Hoof Mark," or "The Wooing of Babsy," and other such charming and intellectual works! A life-story, which must at least be founded on fact, should be of thrilling interest to even the most amateur psychologist, and when the veritable letters of the departed are spread out for our perusal, we are given opportunities of intimacy with the minds of the great which life rarely bestows upon us.

"Official lives" have this recommendation; they show us very plainly what the friends of the deceased *wish* the future estimation of the man to be. Sometimes, like Tennyson's Life by his son, we realize how apart from his daily life a man can keep his special genius. Sometimes, like Mathew Arnold's Life and Letters, we feel that the man's personality is better reflected in his public works than in his private sayings. Sometimes we feel that we know and respect a man better for seeing him at shorter range. The Life of Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, is for instance a correction to those who saw only "Soapy Sam" in a really great man. The Life of Cardinal Manning, another great Churchman, is also a human document showing how vastly mind may and will affect circumstances.

As to "popular biographies," heaven forbid that we should sit down to read them! Paragraphs in "The World" or "M.A.P." will surely serve to whet our curiosity if we cannot allow a private life to a public character. But fulsome little books about the Royal Family or popular celebrities, nicely illustrated with photographs, are not literature, and there is far too great a respect for the good law of libel for them to be scandalous—or amusing.

Critical lives are always of interest, but they are dangerous tools to handle. Perhaps we have not forgotten the storms raised by sundry publications about Robert Louis Stevenson and Prince Bismarck. The truth is that if a man's life cannot be discussed without controversy, three generations must elapse before it had better be attempted, for squabbling over the bones of the dead is unseemly, and apt to show in high relief the very worst qualities of the living. So, for instance, we have no life of Disraeli.

The lives of great men of science, like Darwin, Huxley,

and Sir James Paget, are our only means of surveying their work as a whole, when we are not sufficiently specialists to understand half its intricacies, and therefore they are doubly valuable, as they sum up that debt which humanity owes to it great workers.

Lives written by whole-hearted apologists like O'Brien's "Life of Parnell," or Hilaire Belloc's "Danton," amuse as well as edify; it is beautiful to see the enthusiasm which, in spite of all our belittling tendencies, one man can feel for another.

Biography makes us think of character; not merely of the one character portrayed for us. To realize one man or woman will surely make us desire to realize others. It seems almost absurd to plead that biographies should be more widely read than at present; so let us extend the prayer, and make it that more lives shall be lived worthy of being fitly recorded.

R. A. P.

There are two reasons why people read at all: (1) to learn how to do; (2) to see how things are or were done. Most books teach both.

Biographies teach the former through the latter.

Allow that Education may be called "the Study of Humanity," then the study of the lives of great men must have unquestionably an immense educative value.

Through reading biographies we come to live larger lives, for such reading makes for the realization of the lives of others, as we follow the thought, occupation, the failures and successes of the man in whose life we are interested, we grow (unconsciously) more tolerant, and that part of the mind which forms opinions (as Marcus Aurelius has it) gains greatly in freedom of action.

Biographical study gives one a good idea, given certain circumstances, how the majority of men would act; but, as well, it is a stimulant to us to strive likewise to make our lives sublime. And even reading of men who have *not* come very nigh unto perfection, makes us more sympathetic and less impatient with other's short-comings. Further, this study kills that vile weed cynicism. One feels that all true workers Loved the Labour better than the Wage.

If culture be the power of appreciation, is not the highest culture the power of appreciating the noblest work of God—man? And one cannot arrive thereat except through intercourse with individuals—through a knowledge of their work and ideas.

Lately I read, "Complexity of character is a matter of intellect," *i.e.*, the greater the intelligence the less simple the personality; that to Be as a Little Child is not the way in which to Be Also Perfect. Opposites are true. While not contesting the above, one is convinced that when Cosmo Monkhouse wrote "On a Portrait of Faraday,"

Ah! God, a fitting messenger was he  
To show Thy mysteries to us below.  
Child as he came has he returned to Thee.  
Would he could come but once again to show  
The wonder-deep of his simplicity!

he wrote rightly. And that is only in so far as we can understand—come into touch with—the life of such an one that we will ever learn as he—Michael Faraday—did, to "look with reverent surprise" on all outside one's self, or gain any insight into the mystery of that wondrous, undefinable grace that appertaineth unto those who walk in the way of Perfect Joy. I speak of "humility."

E. A. M.

"The proper study of mankind is man."

If he would confess it, the most interesting life to the average man is his own. It may be a failure, and he may abuse himself and his works in and out of season. Still the reasons why he fails and the ways and means thereof are of absorbing interest to him. If he is a success and counts himself as one of the men of the day, his progress to that end is a course of never-failing delight in the contemplation thereof. To both these types "Know thyself" is an excellent working maxim. These men write their autobiographies. They do not exactly love wage more than others. Then a biography would not educate them. Their "Study of Humanity" would always be a series of com-

parisons. They would not derive culture from that study. The only thing that would reach them would be the work of the man. His life to them would be a thing apart, but his work would appeal to them as a result—an end—that they could understand, and admire, and learn from.

Such characters are complex, not cultured, and simplicity except as a "cult" is far from them. Yet are not all three attributes of the truly great, whose lives we wish to read? complexity, in its variety of interests and wealth of detail; accuracy of knowledge, and that combination of intuition and logic which we call sympathy.

Culture in the appreciation of every work of man in its own proportionate place, and love of a man's soul through the veil of his personality.

Simplicity in the power of absorption in the subject of the moment, the power of concentration, which is the secret of all real knowledge. Surely some of our greatest have possessed these three; Michael Faraday and J. R. Green tell me so.

E. C. A.

### THE H. OF E. "A B C."

- A Ancient Art that we modestly scan,  
'Tis usually wet, but we go to a man.
- B Stands for Baskets, in which Barrow shoots  
All sorts and conditions, the blackboard says "Boots."
- C Is the Class-room, the scene of the "Crits,"  
When our hair stands on end and we nearly have fits.
- D For the Dumb-bells we ply with a vigor,  
Improving our health and our general figure.
- E's Education we wish to supply,  
A Habit, ten Natures, a Destiny high.
- F Stands for Fraulein who studies the cat  
Which loves the T. B. when she lies on the mat.
- G Is the Gossip at afternoon tea,  
'Twere better left out—betwixt you and me.

### THE H. OF E. "A. B. C."

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- H Is for Hygiene which means an exam.,  
Alas! Dr. George—meritorious man!
- I Stands for Ink that no one will try,  
So we rush to a shop, and we penny pots buy.
- J Stands for Juniors, up to their tricks,  
Gay and good humoured, working like Bricks.
- K Is Miss Kitching who wears out a pen  
With one eye on a Dicky its habits to ken.
- L Stands for Latin. Oh me! But it's true!  
What a puzzle I'm in when I try to construe!
- M Is the Medal, of putty they say,  
So easily malleable, better than clay.
- N Stands for Nature, a very shy Dame,  
Whose little ways cause us "How 'cute" to exclaim.
- O Is for Open all windows quite wide;  
We live in a whirlwind—'tis partly from pride.
- P Stands for Pantry, in which we have lunch,  
"The Sergeant is waiting," they cry as we munch.
- Qq Are are the Questions we have, and our woes  
Are grievous and sorry—they come at the close.
- R When R, Mr. Rooper, redoubtable man,  
Walks round to the classes our efforts to scan.
- S Is for Seniors, sagacious and quiet,  
They are wise as a serpent and foes to a riot.
- T's The T. B. When with many a groan  
We make the Child Pianist study our own.
- U The upset, when we pack on the floor  
With boxes and hold-alls a score and ten more.
- V Is the Valor with which we essay  
Insolvable problems to solve in a day.
- W For Washing—both backgrounds and clothes,  
" 'Tis awful expensive" and one of our woes.
- XYZ Are not equal to our ABC,  
Though a wise 'ead remains at the end as you see.  
And now having finished this elegant rhyme,  
Little students, farewell, may you have a good time!

M. L. H.